

Bringing Strength out of Weaknesses: Addressing learning and engagement

November 14, 2015

What you can expect from today's class:

- Get to know one another
- Learning Simulation and Discussion
- Different Learning Difficulties
- 5 minute break
- Student Engagement: How do you get them to pay attention?
- Addressing the spiritual needs of the student
- Questions

"My goal is to not make you like me but to be the best you."

There is an easel set up for you to use. Whenever you have a question that pops in your mind that would be better answered later in the class, just walk over and write it down. This will make sure we cover your questions or we can talk about it after class. I don't want you to forget it and I'm sure it would benefit others.

You're adults. You don't need my permission to stand up, walk around, go to the bathroom, etc... I know it's hard to sit for an hour-and-a-half, so feel free to move about as needed.

How do I keep their attention?

Bringing Strength out of Weaknesses: Addressing learning and engagement

November 14, 2015

Dyslexia

People with dyslexia usually have trouble making the connections between letters and sounds and with spelling and recognizing words.

People with dyslexia often show other signs of the condition. These may include:

- Failure to fully understand what others are saying
- Difficulty organizing written and spoken language
- Delayed ability to speak
- Poor self-expression (for example, saying "thing" or "stuff" for words not recalled)
- Difficulty learning new vocabulary, either through reading or hearing
- Trouble learning foreign languages
- Slowness in learning songs and rhymes
- Slow reading as well as giving up on longer reading tasks
- Difficulty understanding questions and following directions
- Poor spelling
- Difficulty recalling numbers in sequence (for example, telephone numbers and addresses)
- Trouble distinguishing left from right

Do basic memorization tests: Show a sign or cards with different letters for 3-5 seconds. Turn them around, wait 3 seconds and have the student repeat them in the correct order. Same for number.

Dysgraphia

Dysgraphia is characterized by problems with writing. This disorder may cause a child to be tense and awkward when holding a pen or pencil, even to the extent of contorting his or her body. A child with very poor handwriting that he or she does not outgrow may have dysgraphia.

Other signs of this condition may include:

- A strong dislike of writing and/or drawing
- Problems with grammar
- Trouble writing down ideas
- A quick loss of energy and interest while writing
- Trouble writing down thoughts in a logical sequence
- Saying words out loud while writing
- Leaving words unfinished or omitting them when writing sentences

Dyscalculia

Signs of this disability include problems understanding basic arithmetic concepts, such as fractions, number lines, and positive and negative numbers.

Other symptoms may include:

- Difficulty with math-related word problems
- Trouble making change in cash transactions

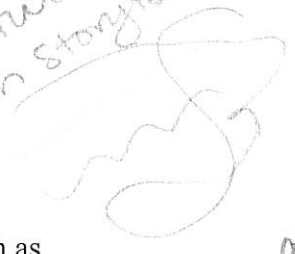
write in sand/rice in a box
block out lines they've read already
Paint brush (w) water

biggest problem UNDERSTANDING

BUILD PERSISTENCE PATIENCE

More active visual spatial reasoning increased

be aware of cultural differences with storytelling



& with grammar

Bringing Strength out of Weaknesses: Addressing learning and engagement

November 14, 2015

- Messiness in putting math problems on paper
- Trouble recognizing logical information sequences (for example, steps in math problems)
- Trouble with understanding the time sequence of events
- Difficulty with verbally describing math processes

Dyspraxia

A person with dyspraxia has problems with motor tasks, such as hand-eye coordination, that can interfere with learning.

Some other symptoms of this condition include⁷:

- Problems organizing oneself and one's things
 - Breaking things
 - Trouble with tasks that require hand-eye coordination, such as coloring within the lines, assembling puzzles, and cutting precisely
 - Poor balance
 - Sensitivity to loud and/or repetitive noises, such as the ticking of a clock
 - Sensitivity to touch, including irritation over bothersome-feeling clothing
-
- **Apraxia of speech.** Sometimes called verbal apraxia, this disorder involves problems with speaking. People with this disorder have trouble saying what they want to say correctly and consistently
 - **Central auditory processing disorder.** People with this condition have trouble understanding and remembering language-related tasks. They have difficulty explaining things, understanding jokes, and following directions. They confuse words and are easily distracted
 - **Nonverbal learning disorders.** People with these conditions have strong verbal skills but great difficulty understanding facial expression and body language. In addition, they are physically clumsy and have trouble generalizing and following multistep directions.
 - **Visual perceptual/visual motor deficit.** People with this condition mix up letters; they might confuse "m" and "w" or "d" and "b," for example. They may also lose their place while reading, copy inaccurately, write messily, and cut paper clumsily.
 - **Aphasia.** Aphasia (pronounced *uh-FEY-zhuh*), also called dysphasia (pronounced *dis-FEY-zhuh*), is a language disorder. A person with this disorder has difficulty understanding spoken language, poor reading comprehension, trouble with writing, and great difficulty finding words to express thoughts and feelings.¹⁴ Aphasia occurs when the language areas of the brain are damaged. In adults, it often is caused by stroke, but children may get aphasia from a brain tumor, head injury, or brain infection.

Bringing Strength out of Weaknesses: Addressing learning and engagement

November 14, 2015

Auditory Processing Disorder (APD)

Also known as Central Auditory Processing Disorder, this is a condition that adversely affects how sound that travels unimpeded through the ear is processed or interpreted by the brain. Individuals with APD do not recognize subtle differences between sounds in words, even when the sounds are loud and clear enough to be heard. They can also find it difficult to tell where sounds are coming from, to make sense of the order of sounds, or to block out competing background noises.

Signs and Symptoms

- Has difficulty processing and remembering language-related tasks but may have no trouble interpreting or recalling non-verbal environmental sounds, music, etc.
- May process thoughts and ideas slowly and have difficulty explaining the
- Misspells and mispronounces similar-sounding words or omits syllables; confuses similar-sounding words (celery/salary; belt/built; three/free; jab/job; bash/batch
- May be confused by figurative language (metaphor, similes) or misunderstand puns and jokes; interprets words too literally
- Often is distracted by background sounds/noises
- Finds it difficult to stay focused on or remember a verbal presentation or lecture
- May misinterpret or have difficulty remembering oral directions; difficulty following directions in a series
- Has difficulty comprehending complex sentence structure or rapid speech
- “Ignores” people, especially if engrossed
- Says “What?” a lot, even when has heard much of what was said

Strategies

- Show rather than explain
- Supplement with more intact senses (use visual cues, signals, handouts, manipulatives)
- Reduce or space directions, give cues such as “ready?”
- Reword or help decipher confusing oral and/or written directions
- Teach abstract vocabulary, word roots, synonyms/antonyms
- Vary pitch and tone of voice, alter pace, stress key words
- Ask specific questions as you teach to find out if they do understand
- Allow them 5-6 seconds to respond (“think time”)
- Have the student constantly verbalize concepts, vocabulary words, rules, etc.

Language Processing Disorder

A specific type of Auditory Processing Disorder (APD) in which there is difficulty attaching meaning to sound groups that form words, sentences and stories. While an APD affects the interpretation of all sounds coming into the brain, a Language Processing Disorder (LPD) relates only to the processing of language. LPD can affect expressive language and/or receptive language.

Signs and Symptoms

- Has difficulty gaining meaning from spoken language
- Demonstrates poor written output
- Exhibits poor reading comprehension
- Shows difficulty expressing thoughts in verbal form
- Has difficulty labeling objects or recognizing labels
- Is often frustrated by having a lot to say and no way to say it
- Feels that words are “right on the tip of my tongue”
- Can describe an object and draw it, but can’t think of the word for it
- May be depressed or having feelings of sadness
- Has difficulty getting jokes

Strategies

- Speak slowly and clearly and use simple sentences to convey information
- Refer to a speech pathologist
- Allow tape recorder for note taking
- Write main concepts on board
- Provide support person or peer tutor
- Use visualization techniques to enhance listening and comprehension
- Use of graphic organizers for note taking from lectures or books
- Use story starters for creative writing assignments
- Practice story mapping
- Draw out details with questions and visualization strategies

Visual Perceptual/Visual Motor Deficit

A disorder that affects the understanding of information that a person sees, or the ability to draw or copy. A characteristic seen in people with learning disabilities such as Dysgraphia or Non-verbal LD, it can result in missing subtle differences in shapes or printed letters, losing place frequently, struggles with cutting, holding pencil too tightly, or poor eye/hand coordination.

Signs and Symptoms

- May have reversals: b for d, p for q or inversions: u for n, w for m

Bringing Strength out of Weaknesses: Addressing learning and engagement

November 14, 2015

- Has difficulty negotiating around campus
- Complains eyes hurt and itch, rubs eyes, complains print blurs while reading
- Turns head when reading across page or holds paper at odd angles
- Closes one eye while working, may yawn while reading
- Cannot copy accurately
- Loses place frequently
- Does not recognize an object/word if only part of it is shown
- Holds pencil too tightly; often breaks pencil point/crayons
- Struggles to cut or paste
- Misaligns letters; may have messy papers, which can include letters colliding, irregular spacing, letters not on line

Strategies

- Avoid grading handwriting
- Allow students to dictate creative stories
- Provide alternative for written assignments
- Suggest use of pencil grips and specially designed pencils and pens\
- Allow use of computer or word processor
- Restrict copying tasks
- Provide tracking tools: ruler, text windows
- Use large print books
- Plan to order or check out books on tape
- Experiment with different paper types: pastels, graph, embossed raised line paper

Executive Functioning

An inefficiency in the cognitive management systems of the brain that affects a variety of neuropsychological processes such as planning, organization, strategizing, paying attention to and remembering details, and managing time and space. Although not a learning disability, different patterns of weakness in executive functioning are almost always seen in the learning profiles of individuals who have specific learning disabilities or ADHD.

Bringing Strength out of Weaknesses: Addressing learning and engagement

November 14, 2015

ADD/ADHD

Adapted from www.helpguide.org

Behaviors:

- They demand attention by talking out of turn or moving around the room.
- They have trouble following instructions, especially when they're presented in a list.
- They often forget to write down homework assignments, do them, or bring completed work to school.
- They often lack fine motor control, which makes note-taking difficult and handwriting a trial to read.
- They often have trouble with operations that require ordered steps, such as long division or solving equations.
- They usually have problems with long-term projects where there is no direct supervision.
- They don't pull their weight during group work and may even keep a group from accomplishing its task.

What you can do:

Starting a lesson

- Signal the start of a lesson with an aural cue, such as a timer, a cowbell or a horn. (You can use subsequent cues to show much time remains in a lesson. You can let them set the timer to encourage a skill they can do on their own.)
- List the activities of the lesson on the board or paper they can see.
- In opening the lesson, tell students what they're going to learn and what your expectations are. Tell students exactly what materials they'll need.
- Establish eye contact with any student who has ADD/ADHD.

Conducting the lesson

- Keep instructions simple and structured,
- Vary the pace and include different kinds of activities. Many students with ADD do well with competitive games or other activities that are rapid and intense.
- Use props, charts, and other visual aids... Small white boards are great
- Have an unobtrusive cue set up with the student who has ADD/ADHD, such as a touch on the shoulder or placing a sign near them or another visual, to remind the student to stay on task.
- Allow a student with ADD/ADHD frequent breaks (Short 30 seconds mental breaks. Calming ones: Lay their head down, close their eyes and rub them softly, etc...)
- Let the student with ADHD squeeze a rubber ball or tap something that doesn't make noise as a physical outlet. (A tennis ball under one of their feet that they can roll around with their foot... be sure to warn them that if it distracts them, it will be taken away. If you get really into it, you can attach a string to a ball and tie it on their shoelace so the ball doesn't run away from them.)

Bringing Strength out of Weaknesses: Addressing learning and engagement

November 14, 2015

Ending the lesson

- Summarize key points.
- If you give an assignment, have the student repeat it three times, then have it written on a piece of paper for them.
- Be specific about what to take home.

Bringing Strength out of Weaknesses: Addressing learning and engagement

November 14, 2015

Student Engagement

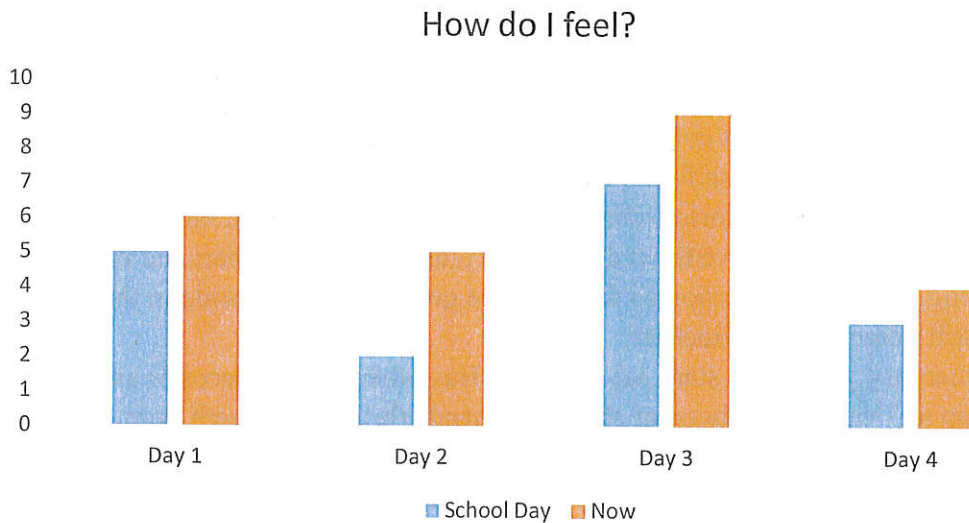
Other things you can do to help gain attention:

- Pause and create suspense by looking around before asking questions.
- Randomly change tones or accents in your voice to catch attention.
- Speak with your hands... lots of movement at times you see them losing interest.
- Use the child's name in a question or in the material being covered.
- Ask a simple question (not even related to the topic at hand) to a child whose attention is beginning to wander.
- Develop a private running joke between you and the child that can be invoked to re-involve you with the child.
- Be close to an inattentive child and touch him or her on the shoulder as you are teaching.
- Decrease the length of assignments or lessons.
- Alternate physical and mental activities.
- Increase the novelty of lessons by using films, tapes, flash cards, or small group work or by having a child call on others... You can break short stories up on flash cards, etc...
- Incorporate the children's interests into a lesson plan.
- Structure in some guided daydreaming time.
- Give simple, concrete instructions, 2-3 times and have them repeat it to you.
- Investigate the use of simple devices that indicate attention versus inattention. (Red light, Green light.. two different colored pieces of paper. When they are paying attention have it on green. When they lose focus, flip it to red.)
- Teach children self-monitoring strategies. Have them rate their attention every 10-15 minutes and at the end have them do a self-evaluation. Keep a chart and review it at the beginning of each new session so they can see growth and take pride in that.
- Use a soft voice to give direction.
- Insert memory games. To start, say 3 words. Have them wait 3 seconds and then repeat. Work up to 7 words, numbers, or short commands (brush your teeth, turn on the light, take off your coat, etc...) Make it more game like by playing with speed. You can do sound memory cards that they have to match by flipping over a matching pair...or say a word and have them quickly find the letters in a group to spell out the word. They can then give you a word and have you do the same.
- Have them repeat the question (clarifying it would be next step) you asked before they answer.
- Have them use a small mirror when practicing phonetic sounds. They watch your mouth make the sound and then look at the mirror to make sure they are moving their mouth muscles correctly. For some this will slow them down and provide a visual to help them remember better.
- Make them the teacher for a portion of the class. Have them teach you a story, words, etc... in the way that they learn best. (Will give you some insights into what pieces of your teaching style they relate best to).

Bringing Strength out of Weaknesses: Addressing learning and engagement

November 14, 2015

- Teach the student how to subvocalize when reading. As opposed to reading silently, subvocalizing means to say the words while reading, but to do so very softly so that the words are barely audible to others.
- Comprehension: Engage their imagination. Read a short paragraph and ask them to picture everything you say like a movie. Then set a timer for 30 seconds and ask them to tell you what they imagined.
- Comprehension: When they reads fiction, train them to look for the five W's: Who are the main characters, where and when does the story take place, what conflicts do the characters face, and why do they act as they do.
- Comprehension: When reading a book with your child, stop occasionally to ask what she thinks might happen next. This requires her to integrate what she has learned so far about the characters and storyline—and about the way stories are typically organized—to anticipate the rest of the plot
- Start each class with something routine... I always start with a corny joke. Then I jump into having them put a star or color in a chart telling me how they feel that day. This lets me know a glimpse of the emotional level of the child I am getting that day. Example here:



- Use pictures with words (Snapwords) when learning new vocabulary:



Bringing Strength out of Weaknesses: Addressing learning and engagement

November 14, 2015

Other Resources

- Vocabulary, reading and stories in Rap Form:
<https://www.flocabulary.com/subjects/>
- <http://www.child1st.com/> (Snapwords)
- www.quizlet.com You can make computer based flashcards that can be used to practice with, create quizzes/tests with, and play games with. Also an app for phones/tablets.

Feel free to contact me anytime with specific questions or resource needs.

My Contact information:

Dr. Bobbie Sparks

bobbie@timeandeternity.net

Cell: 817-714-9075 (Text or Call)

